

CLAIMS OF THE INVENTION

I CLAIM:

1. A food preparation appliance comprising a base unit and a container in which food to be prepared is placed, said container including a base and at least one upwardly extending wall, said base and at least one wall defining an interior of said container, a helical blade positioned in said interior of said container for moving material placed in the container, said base unit including an inductive heating element, said inductive heating element positioned below a generally planar support on which said container may be placed and said base unit including a rotational drive mechanism, said rotational drive mechanism adapted to rotate said helical blade.

2. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 1 including a swiping blade positioned radially outward of said helical blade and rotatable with said helical blade, said swiping blade engaging said at least one upwardly extending wall.

3. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said rotational drive mechanism comprises a motor driving a drive element, said drive element having an aperture therein for accepting an end of a spindle, said spindle coupled to said helical blade.

4. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said generally planar support has an aperture therein through which a drive element connecting said helical blade and rotational drive mechanism may extend.

5. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said base unit includes a controller controlling the operation of said induction heating unit and said rotational drive mechanism.

6. A method of preparing food with a food preparation appliance including a base unit including an inductive heating unit and a container having a mixing blade located therein comprising:

- accepting user input regarding a speed of said mixing blade;
- accepting user input regarding a level of heating to be provided with said heating unit;
- rotating said mixing blade within said container in accordance with said selected speed; and
- heating said container with said inductive heating unit in accordance with said selected level of heating.

7. The method in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said food preparation appliance includes a thermistor and including the steps of providing container temperature data and adjusting said heating of said container based upon said temperature data.

8. The method in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said food preparation appliance includes a memory storing a plurality of mixing blade speed and heating level information data sets, and wherein said steps of accepting user input comprise accepting an input regarding a selection of one of said information data sets.

relation with a drive member, said drive member including a recessed portion for accepting a mating portion of said second end of said connecting rod, and a control unit, said control unit including one or more controls for accepting input from a user, said control unit operably associated with said motor for controlling said motor and said inductive heating element for controlling the operation of said heating element.

13. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 12 wherein said motor has an output shaft with a driving gear thereon and said drive member has a driven gear connected thereto which is driven by said driving gear.

14. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 12 wherein said housing defines a control panel and one or more of said controls are located at said control panel.

15. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 12 wherein a frame having a top portion and a bottom portion extends from said helical blade, said swiping blade connected to said frame.

16. The food preparation appliance in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said bottom portion of said frame includes a slot for accepting a first end of said blade and said top portion of said frame includes an aperture for accepting a fastener connecting a second end of said blade thereto.

